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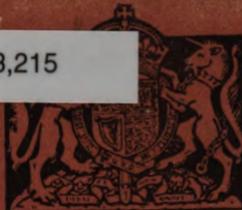
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COLONIAL ANNUAL REPORTS

Turks & Caicos Islands

1947



LONDON: HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

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THE SERIES OF COLONIAL ANNUAL REPORTS
which was re-introduced for the year 1946 (after
suspension in 1940) is being continued with those
relating to 1947.

It is anticipated that the Colonies and Protectorates
for which 1947 Reports are being published will, with
some additions, be the same as for the previous year
(see list on cover page 3).

COLONIAL OFFICE

ANNUAL REPORT ON
 THE TURKS AND
 CAICOS ISLANDS
 FOR THE YEAR
1947

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LONDON: HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

1948

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Cover illustration shows salt being loaded for export

Puerto Rico
Salinas
Salt Caye
standard

PART I

Review of 1947

THE year 1947 was one of exceptional interest from many points of view. The Dependency was visited by His Excellency the Governor of Jamaica, Sir John Huggins, K.C.M.G., and also by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Right Honourable Arthur Creech Jones, M.P., and Mrs. Creech Jones. Sir John Huggins accompanied by his A.D.C. visited the Dependency in H.M.S. *Porlock Bay* and stayed from 13th January to 15th January, 1947. The last Governor's visit was in 1939 by Sir Arthur Richards (now Lord Milverton).

His Excellency Sir John Huggins addressed the Legislative Board; referring to the damage done by the hurricane of 1945, His Excellency mentioned that His Majesty's Government had contributed £13,000 and the Government of Jamaica £15,000 in cash and lumber to the Hurricane Relief Fund.

Going on to discuss the salt industry the Governor said :

"As you know, the main problem here is the future of the salt industry. Various schemes have been put forward for its development. The one which is most strongly supported here is a scheme for the nationalisation of the industry."

The Governor visited the public buildings, salinas, etc., in Grand Turk and in the island of Salt Cay. A landing at Cockburn Harbour on South Caicos Island was prevented by the heavy sea which was running.

The Secretary of State who was travelling to Jamaica by the S.S. *Tilapa* for the Montego Bay Conference on federation in the West Indies landed at Grand Turk on 31st August and stayed for about seven hours. This was the first occasion on which a British Cabinet Minister had ever visited the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The Secretary of State addressed the Legislative Board and the Salt Industry Board. The urgent need to finalise and implement the Salt Industry Plan was stressed by both Boards. In reply to the Legislative Board the Secretary of State said :

"I do feel it is a great privilege for me to come to these islands. It is the first occasion that I have been able to visit any territory under the British Empire since I have assumed the responsibilities of Secretary of State for the Colonies and I would not like you to think that because it is a small part of the Empire it is not important in our eyes. We feel that perhaps we should give more thought and attention to some of the smaller places in the far-flung territories of the Empire, but you will remember that in London we have very

wide responsibilities and if we do not appear to worry about the small places it is not that we do not remember them.

"I understand that perhaps I am the only Minister who has visited these islands for a very long time. This makes my pleasure all the more. I am very glad of the privilege to be able to come. I am conscious that you have very real problems here in these islands. Your economic difficulties are very real, and it is very difficult with economic resources so limited to provide for your social services so necessary for good living, health arrangements, developments in housing, and all the other important services. Because of that, I think we have a very special obligation to help as far as we can the social and economic improvements of the place. We understand your problems and I can assure you of our deep interest and concern for your well-being. A testimony of the genuineness of that interest is my presence here. At home in England we are going through a difficult crisis. We are finding difficulty in restoring our own economic life and we are conscious of many things we would like to have but have to go without. However, we want to assure you that although conditions are difficult in England, we are not unmindful of territories overseas.

"I thank you for this very kind invitation to come here. My presence here is a symbol of the regard of His Majesty's Government and I would like to express their good wishes to all who are present. I will take back your good wishes to His Majesty's Government in London. I reiterate to you the good sentiments you have expressed in your address of welcome which I warmly regard. I shall make it my business to understand the problems you have to contend with here and do all I can to considerably accelerate general improvements here and to see that you are more prosperous in days to come.

"I thank you for receiving me in so friendly a spirit. My visit here shows the deep appreciation and regard for you in London. It may be of some interest to know that I suppose in no part of the British history has there been so practical an interest in the British Colonies as there is to-day. More interest, more discussion, and more attention have been shown in Parliament than ever before. I think that I should let you know that we are trying with our limited resources to make available financial aid to assist territories overseas in overcoming their difficulties. I can assure you that I have already seen the proposals submitted through the Jamaica Government by the Commissioner and other representatives here. I note your precarious position and shall do my best to help you.

"Again, I thank you very much for giving me so kind a welcome."

The year was also memorable for the completion and acceptance of the Dependency's Development Plan by the Governor for submission to the Secretary of State. The total sum allotted to the Turks and Caicos Islands, including a small reserve and the sum of £50,000 reserved for the reorganisation of the salt industry, is £150,000. By local standards, and indeed by any standard when the smallness of the population is considered, this is a most generous allocation. The thanks of everyone in these Islands is due to the British taxpayer and also to the Government of Jamaica for agreeing to an allocation which is *per capita* greatly in excess of the sum reserved for the people of Jamaica itself.

The Development Plan allows, over a period of rather more than five years, for :

- (a) An agricultural experiment designed to improve the standard of farming and care of small stock to the greatest degree possible in the conditions prevailing in these Islands which are very barren and arid.
- (b) The improvement of the standard of education, particularly of elementary education, which though free and theoretically

compulsory is deplorably low, due chiefly to lack of funds. Provision is made for supervisory staff and the training of teachers themselves; improvement in the salary scales and housing of teachers; improvement, repair, reconstruction and additions to school buildings; and some additional equipment for schools.

(c) Complete reorganisation of the public health services.

Present conditions are deplorable, there is little trained nursing staff, the one hospital is far below the minimum standard acceptable; the Medical Officer in the Caicos Islands has to do his work in two cells under the District Commissioner's Office and the single clinic operating in the Caicos Islands is an unsuitable rented building. The Plan provides for training of nursing staff; building of two small modern hospitals at Grand Turk and South Caicos; five clinics, one at Salt Cay in the Turks Islands and four in the Caicos Islands; quarters for Medical Officers and in certain cases for nursing staff; the removal of lepers to Jamaica for segregation and treatment; and an experiment in house building.

(d) The continuation of an existing scheme to provide a manager for the salt industry. The reorganisation of the salt industry is covered by a separate major scheme which will be mentioned later.

(e) The training of social welfare workers and the re-housing of juvenile delinquents; proposals for social welfare are very much limited by lack of funds.

(f) Miscellaneous schemes. This heading covers a number of exceedingly useful minor schemes including a new lantern for the Grand Turk Lighthouse, and an unattended flashing light to be erected on Great Sand Cay. These lights will greatly improve the safety of navigation for ships using the Turks Islands Passage. There is also provision for an extension of the sea wall at Grand Turk, for a wireless receiving and transmitting set for the Caicos Islands and for additional staff required to implement the Development Plan.

The following is a financial summary of the Plan by heads:

<i>Head</i>	<i>Capital</i> £	<i>Recurring</i> £	<i>Residual</i> <i>recurring</i>
			£
Agriculture . . .	2,385	7,282	1,685
Education . . .	13,700	8,547	1,575
Public Health . . .	25,360	14,100	3,039
Salt Industry . . .	3,118	—	—
Social Welfare . . .	460	1,500	300
Miscellaneous . . .	13,338	6,946	595
TOTALS . . .	£58,361	£38,375	£7,194

**SUMMARY OF PLAN INCLUDING REORGANISATION OF SALT
INDUSTRY AND ALLOCATION TO RESERVE**

	£
Capital	58,361
Recurrent	38,375
Reserve	3,264
Salt Industry	<u>50,000</u>
	£150,000

The most significant figure is that showing the estimated residual annually recurrent expenditure after the various schemes for the development and welfare of the Dependency are completed. The figure is £7,194. That is to say, the added burden which must be placed on revenue after the schemes for improving social and other services have expired is in excess of £7,000 a year. The revenue is even to-day inadequate and the Dependency only just solvent, and it is clear that the yield of additional taxation will not be great. It is therefore clear that only a revival of industry and a great increase in exports can enable the Dependency to bear the resulting additional annual cost of improved social services.

The salt industry is the only one capable of producing sufficient income to enable the Dependency to carry the residual additional recurrent expenditure which will arise from the implementation of the Development Plan ; but owing to its present depressed condition the industry requires special attention if it is to be revived ; a plan has been prepared and will be examined shortly. This industry is the only one for which there is any prospect of large-scale expansion and on the revival and prosperity of this industry the future of the Dependency largely rests.

Some interesting small-scale experiments in increasing the rate of loading salt into steamers were carried out during the year and not only was the loading rate of 1,000 tons a day reached on several occasions but the total amount of salt exported, including 51,700 tons of salt purchased as a relief measure by His Majesty's Government during the war, was the greatest in the history of the Dependency. A total of 70,340 tons was exported in 1947 which was greater by 6,523 tons than the previous record of 63,817 tons exported in the year 1859.

During the year the small American base on South Caicos Island, together with its fine airstrip, was handed over to the Government of the Dependency. A small airstrip 2,200 feet in length suitable for light aircraft was constructed at Grand Turk.

An interesting development in communication was made in December when a radio telephone service between Turks Islands and Jamaica was opened.

The work of hurricane relief necessitated by the hurricane of 1945 continued throughout the year.

PART II

Chapter I : Population

THE last census was taken in 1943 when the population of the Dependency was 6,138.

Persons of African descent	4,081
Persons of mixed descent	1,935
Persons of European descent	122

The estimated population in 1947 was 6,455. Females exceed males in number.

The births and deaths registered during the last eight years were as follows :

	Number of Births	Number of Deaths	Birth-rate per 1,000	Death-rate per 1,000
1940	226	109	40·4	19·4
1941	215	131	38·6	23·54
1942	223	103	42·1	19·5
1943	244	103	39·7	16·8
1944	209	99	34	16·1
1945	249	234	38·9	36·54
1946	204	93	31·3	14·3
1947	220	82	36·7	13·4

The above rates up to 1942 are based on the population of 1921, and from 1943 on the population of 1943. The number of females exceeded the number of males by 19·9 per cent at the time of the census.

The number of deaths of children under 1 year of age in 1947 was 26, equal to a death-rate of 118·2 per 1,000 births; and in 1946 the corresponding figures were 29 and 142 per 1,000. Twenty-four marriages were registered in 1947.

The emigration and immigration figures for the year under review were :

Entered	196
Departed	356

Chapter 2 : Occupations, Wages and Labour Organisation

The demand for labour is principally confined to that required in connection with the salt industry and does not exceed 200 men. The demand is seasonal. One of the principal reasons for the proposal to rehabilitate this industry and bring it under public ownership is the need to provide regular and better-paid employment. The difficulty in raising wages to allow for the great increase in the cost of living lies in the continuing low world price of salt and in the difficulty in regaining markets lost during the war. The actual shipping of salt requires considerable additional labour which is found by the temporary employment of fishermen, artisans, tailors and the like. Rates paid for shipping are good and the supply of this casual labour exceeds the demand. Some women are employed, when salt is shipped, to fill the small half-bushel bags which are used for loading lighters.

There is a limited amount of employment on steamers, and some labour is required by the salt industry at Inagua in the Bahamas, and in the lumber industry at Abaco in the Bahamas. Unemployment has been severe for many years and there is a tendency for the best men to leave the Dependency whenever a chance of employment elsewhere occurs. There was, however, far more employment in 1947 than for many years due to large exports of salt to Japan. Prospects for 1948 are encouraging.

Employers are not responsible for housing or feeding their employees. There is no workmen's compensation act or unemployment insurance scheme. There is a Minimum Wages Ordinance. There has been a tendency for wages to rise and the general level is above the legal minimum rates.

The average rate of wages for labourers employed in raking and carting salt is from 3s. to 3s. 6d. a day of ten hours and from 10s. to 15s. a day when shipping it. Carpenters and blacksmiths earn from 5s. to 10s. a day of nine hours. The few lorry drivers earn 6s. per day.

In domestic service the wages vary from 30s. to 50s. a month for female servants, usually with rations. Employment of males as butlers, etc., is now rare. Payment of wages in goods from the stores of the salt proprietors is no longer prevalent.

The cost of living has risen by about 83 per cent since the outbreak of war, and in the same period labourers wages have risen about 25 per cent. Since 1942 His Majesty's Government has generously granted an annual subsidy. But for the subsidy so far granted, the cost of living would have mounted to 149 per cent above pre-war prices. The biggest single cause of the increase is the impossibility of obtaining direct shipments of food-stuffs from Canada and the United States of America which were the natural sources of supply in pre-war years. All supplies have to be obtained from Jamaica. Handling and transhipment from Jamaica is estimated to increase the cost of items imported by about 30 per cent over the direct landed cost.

Chapter 3 : Public Finance and Taxation

The following table shows the totals of revenue and expenditure in the last five years :

	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
	£	£
1943-44	34,757	34,701
1944-45	34,815	30,562
1945-46	64,069	53,307
1946-47 (estimated)	32,217	38,641
1947-48 (estimated)	42,614	47,393

The financial year 1947-48 opened with a surplus of £5,817 and is expected to close with a surplus of £1,038. The depletion of the surplus funds of the Dependency was largely due to expenditure on hurricane relief.

There is no public debt.

The main items of revenue were estimated as follows :

	<i>1947-48</i>
	£
Customs Duties	10,501
Royalty on Salt	4,000
Port Dues	750
Internal Revenue	1,540
Fees of Court and Office	222
Departmental Revenue	200
Reimbursements	1,163
Post Office	7,690
Interest	50
Miscellaneous Receipts	840
Colonial Development and Welfare	7,862
Extraordinary Revenue	7,796

The main items of expenditure were estimated as follows :

	<i>1947-48</i>
	£
Pensions	1,241
Commissioner's Department	3,411
Treasury and Customs	2,716
Judicial Department	1,346
Police and Prisons	2,107
Prisons	975
Medical Department	4,315
Paupers and Lunatics	1,140
Education	2,120
Miscellaneous	1,933
Post Office	1,555
Lighthouse Department	458
Savings Bank	367
Public Works Department	460

1947-48

£

Public Works Recurrent	1,900
Colonial Development and Welfare	7,862
Extraordinary Expenditure	13,487

Taxation in this Dependency is light. There is no income tax, no land tax, no property tax, no taxes on trades, animals or vehicles, no poll tax and no excise or stamp duties. Additional taxation is being introduced in 1948.

The principal sources of revenue are the customs import duties and the royalty on salt exported. There have also been some sales of stamps.

The Customs Tariff was amended in March 1932, when a British Preferential Tariff was introduced here for the first time. The specific duties are low in comparison with similar duties levied in most of the other Colonies. All goods not particularly specified nor included in the free list pay duty as follows :

British Preferential Tariff	10 per cent <i>ad valorem</i>
General Tariff	15 per cent <i>ad valorem</i>

The present sound financial position of the Dependency is largely due to the sale of the commemorative stamp issues in 1946-47. Trade has improved slightly during the past two years. Salt, the main item of export, is, however, a low-priced commodity and markets are unstable. It is unlikely that, unless the salt industry can be successfully reorganised and markets recovered, revenue will meet expenditure in a normal year.

Chapter 4: Currency and Banking

At 31st December, 1947, there were 1,178 accounts in operation in the Government Savings Bank with £51,213 12s. 1d. to the credit of depositors. Deposits and withdrawals were £26,172 18s. 1d. and £21,771 2s. 3d. respectively. Interest paid to depositors was £2,146 8s. 10d. The book value of Savings Bank investments was £50,820 13s. 1d. at 31st December, 1947. The increase in Savings Bank business is indicated by the following comparison : Amount due to depositors at 31st December, 1938, was £1,000 10s. 1d., while at 31st December, 1947, it was £51,213 12s. 1d. Foreign currency notes and British silver of all denominations circulate.

Chapter 5: Commerce

The volume of the trade of these Islands during the last six years was as

1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
£70,162	£82,772	£93,731	£60,864	£72,244
		£21,293	£31,891	£55,501
			£0.024	£92,755
				£127,745

IMPORTS

The following table shows the value and origin of imports in the last six years :

	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>Other parts of the British Empire</i>	<i>Foreign Countries</i>	<i>Total</i>
	£	£	£	£
1942	4,221	14,946	11,981	31,148
1943	13,113	44,209	12,841	70,163
1944	740	40,527	17,005	58,272
1945	330	78,440	14,961	93,731
1946	509	50,905	9,390	60,864
1947	1,116	54,882	16,246	72,244

Seventy-seven per cent of imports were from the British Empire and 23 per cent from foreign countries.

The following is a classified summary of the imports for the year 1947 showing the percentage supplied by the British Empire and by foreign countries :

	1947	<i>British Empire</i>	<i>Foreign countries</i>
	£	%	%
Food, drink and tobacco	52,910	79	21
Raw materials	2,540	95	5
Manufactured articles	14,462	89	11
Unclassified	2,332	71	29
TOTAL	£72,244		

EXPORTS

During 1947 the declared value of the exports of the Dependency was £55,501.

The following table shows the direction of the domestic exports in the last six years :

	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>Other parts of the British Empire</i>	<i>Foreign countries</i>	<i>Total</i>
	—	£	£	£
1942	—	11,429	7,027	18,456
1943	—	8,743	3,993	12,646
1944	—	10,500	3,867	14,367
1945	—	17,607	3,686	21,293
1946	5	26,704	5,187	31,896
1947	—	23,627	31,874	55,501

Of exports 43 per cent were sent to the Empire and 57 per cent to foreign countries.

Chapter 6 : Production

The principal industry in this Dependency is the production of salt from sea water by solar evaporation. The industry is carried on at three centres, Grand Turk, Salt Cay and Cockburn Harbour on South Caicos. The annual output, which over the past 25 years has averaged 1,300,000 bushels which equals 43,000 tons annually is the product of salinas owned by proprietors. The salt is shipped to Canada and the United States and is used there for fish-curing and meat-packing.

It is also shipped to Jamaica. Efforts are being made to extend the markets. Turks Islands salt was famous for its purity and it had an excellent reputation in the markets of the countries mentioned above. The industry has declined of recent years due to the splitting up of salinas into small holdings, loss of markets during the war, a decline in purity of the salt produced and lack of capital for redesign of salinas and for the improvement of loading facilities and lighters. As one result of an investigation made in 1945, there has been a steady improvement in the quality of salt produced in the larger salinas.

Co-operation between lighter owners has gone some way to speed up loading cargoes into vessels. The complete rehabilitation of the industry and the possibility of bringing it under public ownership was being actively explored during 1947. Three grades are exported: coarse, the natural product of the salinas; fishery, a grade processed to a fineness suitable for the curing of fish; and industrial, fine ground, suitable for dairy and similar uses. The coarse and fishery grades are largely shipped in bulk; the industrial is bagged.

There was no salt raking in 1947. The price of salt has remained low. At the close of the year about 47,000 tons of producers' stocks were in hand.

Employment during the year was maintained by shipping 51,700 tons of salt, purchased by His Majesty's Government during the war as a relief measure, to Japan.

The following table shows the destination, quantity and value of the salt shipments in 1947:

<i>Destination</i>	<i>Quantity (tons)</i>	<i>Value</i>
		£ s. d.
Jamaica . . .	5,132	10,475 7 8
Canada . . .	6,506	6,589 17 0
Newfoundland . . .	6,478	6,561 15 9
United States . . .	441	348 8 11
Local . . .	5	5 0 0
Japan . . .	51,778	25,889 0 0
TOTAL . . .	70,340	£49,869 9 4

The average price received per ton for the salt was thus only 14s.

There were no large exports of sponge during the year, but the improved condition of the banks, which were depleted by disease in the early part of the war, encourages the belief that this industry can be revived within a few years.

Agriculture is mainly confined to the Caicos Islands, where the people can, in a good year, produce sufficient corn, fruit and vegetables to maintain themselves and sell a surplus at the main settlements. On the Turks Islands group very little is grown and the people have to rely mainly on the wages obtained from the salt industry to purchase imported food.

Again this year owing to severe droughts the crops were below average.

In years past the exports of sisal and cotton were of considerable value to the Dependency. The fall in prices and failure to produce the first crop resulted in the closing down of the plantations. An attempt is being made to revive sisal growing as a peasant industry and a small amount of rope is exported to Jamaica.

The export of crawfish to the United States of America assumed considerable proportions during the year. Careful control is being exercised to avoid depletion of the banks. Only local fishermen are employed and good money is earned.

The following table shows the quantity and value of the principal items of domestic produce exported during the last six years :

	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
Salt						
bushels	429,386	236,181	266,894	356,948	586,234	2,083,771
value	£14,755	£8,535	£10,499	£14,370	£25,737	£49,869 9s. 4d.
Sponge						
lb.	—	—	770	—	—	300
value	—	—	£250	—	—	£10
Conchs						
number	3,627,050	3,880,370	3,518,090	3,169,300	3,353,850	3,631,750
value	£3,626	£3,880	£3,518	£3,170	£3,354	£3,631 15s. od.
Sisal						
lb.	3,400	17,920	—	—	—	—
value	£30	£208	—	—	—	—
Sisal Rope						
lb.	—	—	—	89,957	54,500	—
value	—	—	—	£3,610	£2,800	—
Crawfish						
number	—	—	—	—	—	80,000
value	—	—	—	—	—	£2,000

Note : 30 bushels of coarse salt or 28 bushels of fishery grade salt equal 1 ton.

Chapter 7: Social Services

EDUCATION

The education system of the Dependency is under the direction of the Board of Education, nominated by the Commissioner, who is chairman.

Primary education is provided by the Government free of charge. It is compulsory in the three principal settlements of the Dependency, namely, Grand Turk, Cockburn Harbour and Salt Cay, for children between the ages of 7 and 14 years, but it is not compulsory in the outlying settlements in the Caicos Islands, where it is not possible to maintain schools to meet the requirements of some of the small isolated communities.

The Board of Education receives an annual grant from the Government. There are 11 elementary schools.

In 1947 the number of scholars whose names were enrolled was 960, and the average attendance 670. There were also 3 private elementary schools with a total of 22 pupils. Whilst the average appears to be small, it should be remembered that the settlements in the Caicos Islands are scattered and many children are not within reach of a school. Many who do attend have to walk long distances in great heat and along bad roads.

During the food shortage free issues of milk and cod-liver oil were made. Owing to the very small salaries offered and the lack of proper training facilities, there is great difficulty in obtaining efficient teachers

the schools and very few of those employed can be regarded as being

really competent. Improvement in the standard of school buildings, equipment, sanitation, playing grounds, etc., is badly needed, and a grant for these purposes is envisaged in the Development Plan (see page 4). Improvements in teachers salaries and the provision of teacher-training courses are planned.

There is a Senior Government School at Grand Turk. In 1947 there were 35 pupils on the roll, and the average attendance was 33. A centre for the Cambridge University Local Examinations was established at Grand Turk in 1924, and local examinations have been held annually, with generally satisfactory results.

No technical education is provided in this Dependency, nor are there any evening classes.

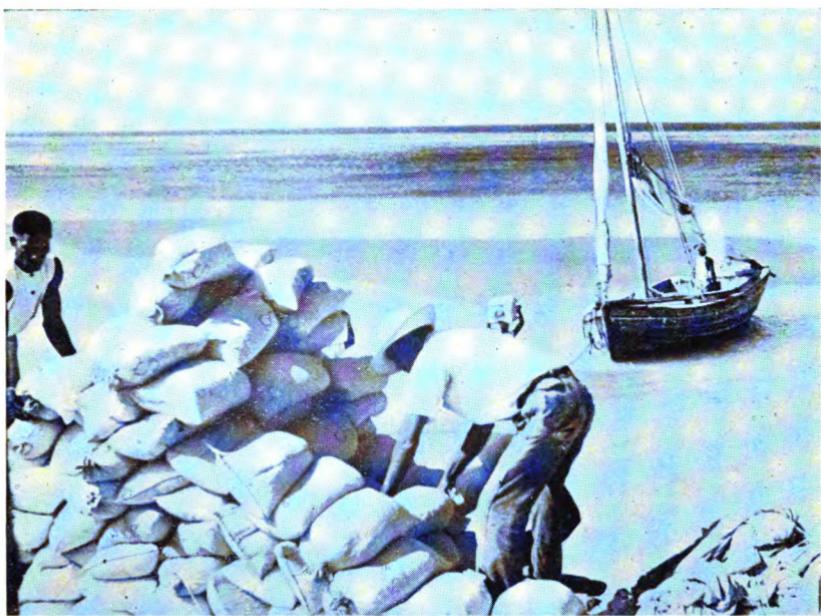
Over 85 per cent of the Dependency's population is literate, and there is a good public library and free reading room at Grand Turk. It is well-stocked with books and provides a good assortment of current papers and magazines. Generous assistance has been given by the British Council. Sub-libraries were opened at six other centres.

HEALTH

The principal cause of death in this Dependency is old age. Mal-nutrition and vitamin deficiency, especially of the vitamin B group, are common and form a large percentage of the morbidity. Due to the drought in the summer months and the large number of flies, there is a low-grade infantile diarrhoea with characteristic "green stool." Clinically, this resembles the sonne type of dysentery. The incidence has been markedly reduced by spraying with DDT. The eye condition of pterygium is still present in a high percentage of the inhabitants although they have been warned against the glare of the salt heaps and advised to wear dark glasses.

Infectious Diseases

This year the Dependency suffered three outbreaks of disease, the first of which was impetigo. Ninety per cent of the children between 6 months and 6 years were affected. Secondly, there was an outbreak of infectious jaundice. The number affected was 41: 2 adults and 39 children; there was one death. This was due to the severe drought which all but depleted our water supply necessitating the use of water which was really non-potable. The public did not respond to the advice given against drinking tank water without previously boiling and straining. The source of infection, which was a water storage tank, was traced, cleaned out and white-limed. The third outbreak was that of typhoid which is still present although under control. Seven cases were recorded with two deaths. Typhoid vaccine was flown in from the nearby Republic of Haiti and the entire population is at present undergoing inoculation (over 500 persons have so far been inoculated). The cause of this outbreak, which started in the poorest sections of Grand Turk, was undoubtedly the severe drought, the uncertain water supply, the poor sanitation and the state of sanitation in the district. The source of infection was traced.



SALT LOADING: OLD STYLE

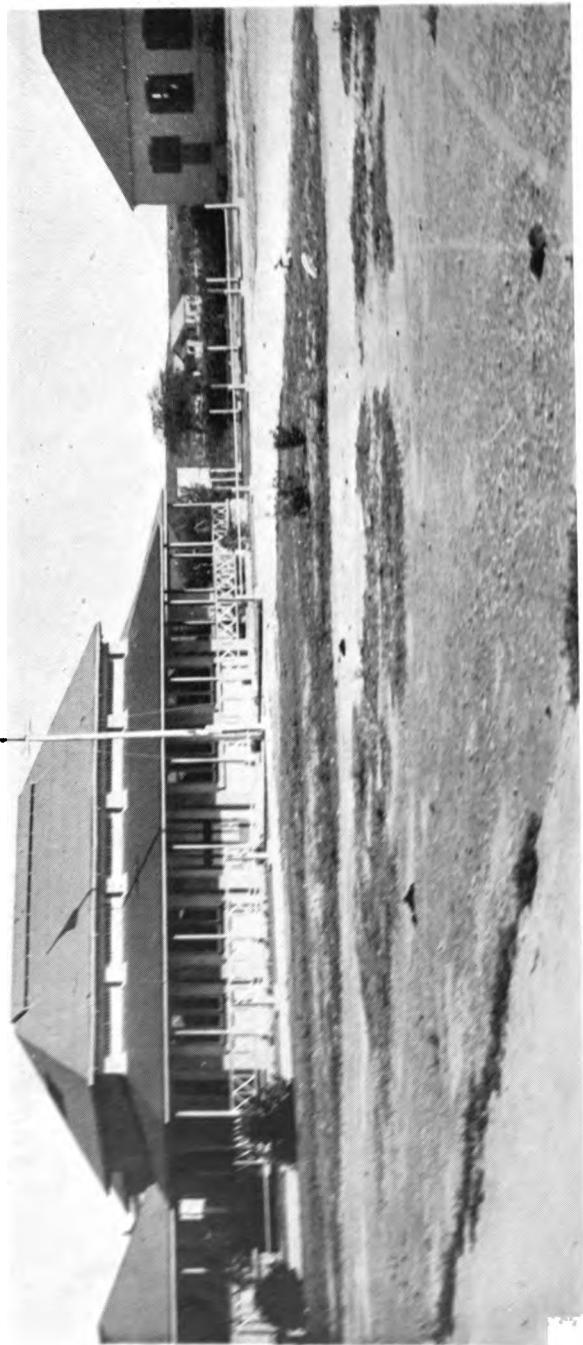


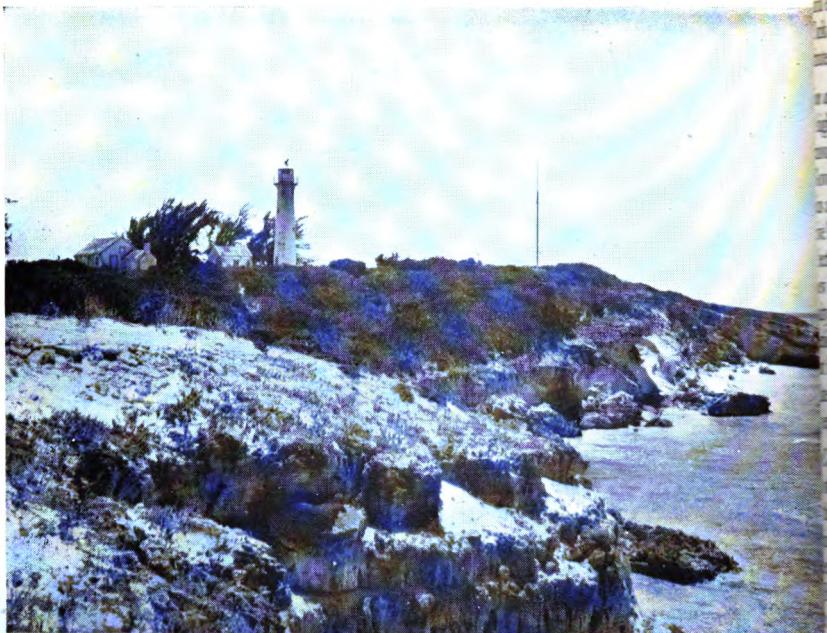
SALT LOADING: NEW STYLE



GOVERNMENT OFFICES : GRAND TURK

GOVERNMENT SENIOR SCHOOL : GRAND TURK





GRAND TURK LIGHTHOUSE

A new lantern is now being fitted under a Colonial Development and Welfare grant



MMIN

CAY : SALINAS IN BACKGROUND

Malaria exists in the Caicos Islands but little or none in the islands of Turk and Salt Cay. Efforts are being made to make a proper survey and constitute adequate therapy.

Infection and Treatment

The highest cause of morbidity is still malnutrition and avitaminosis. Large amounts of vitamins, cod-liver oil and food yeast, are distributed through the Government dispensaries. However, the real problem is one of economics and only work will eventually eradicate this evil.

A drive has been made in this Dependency to eradicate venereal disease. Several lectures were given on the most common types and the efficacy of the new methods of treatment strongly stressed. The response of the community was excellent. The incidence was markedly reduced by the use of penicillin, marharsen and bismuth, and it is gratifying to state that in the last few months only three new cases were seen in the dispensaries. A Maternity and Welfare Clinic was established four years ago and is working excellently.

Nursing Care

This still remains unsatisfactory. However, efforts are being made to remedy this. Four years ago eight young women were sent to Jamaica for training. All have completed the general course except one; two also completed the Public Health Course; two more are at present attending Public Health School; one has returned and worked for a few months, but is at present in Jamaica on sick leave.

Hospitals

Provisions are being made in the five-year plan for the building of new hospitals at Grand Turk and Cockburn Harbour. The Dental Officer will be accommodated in these buildings. At present the dental and medical staff work under considerable difficulties. The only hospital in existence is the old and dilapidated 15-bed Manning Hospital which is really a poor house and hospital combined. Fire destroyed the operating room on 31st March, 1947, but it was rebuilt and functioning within six weeks. Many operations are done with success in spite of the primitive surroundings under which they are carried out. Credit must be ascribed to the healthy climate, care and skill of the medical and nursing staff. There is also a Welfare Clinic and small Maternity Ward under a midwife at Bottle Creek in the Caicos group of islands. Good work has been done here. However, due to the distance and lack of supervision by the Medical Officer has not been adequate.

Drainage Works

The vicinities of the principal towns and settlements are free of drainage and no drainage is necessary.

Water Supply

The water supply of the Islands is provided by tanks which are well-constructed. In addition to this there are shallow and deep wells. The deep wells supplement the water supply of the population in time of drought. New ones are used for cattle. The Public Works keep them in a state of repair.

Sanitation

There is no sewage system except in one or two private homes where a septic pit water closet system is used. The majority are pit latrines. Unfortunately, some houses have no latrines whatsoever. Efforts are being made to have them put in. This is not due to deliberate negligence but again to economics. The fly menace is a real one and results were clearly pointed out by the outbreak of typhoid in November although for the first time there had been two sprayings with DDT during the year. Quarterly sprayings have been recommended by the Medical Officers. At present there is only one Sanitary Inspector to cover the entire Dependency.

HOUSING

According to the 1943 census there were 1,365 dwelling houses in these Islands; 889 were built of wood and 446 of stone and 30 were of other construction. During the hurricane of 1945 the number of dwelling houses destroyed was 536 and the number damaged was 754. Rehabilitation is still in progress and so far 136 houses have been rebuilt and 185 damaged houses have been repaired. Materials have been supplied to assist owners to repair their own houses in an additional 74 cases.

As regards the housing accommodation of the wage-earning population, nearly all of them live in small houses of two or three rooms with small out-houses nearby serving as kitchen, latrine, etc., and with very few exceptions they own the houses which they occupy. The sanitary conditions are fair. The Sanitary Inspector and the Police see that the requirements of the sanitary laws are observed. The Sanitary Inspector was appointed late in 1946.

There is no building law and the people are free to build as they please. A complete revision of the out-of-date public health legislation and the introduction of building regulations is under consideration.

There is no property tax in this Dependency but one is now prepared and the necessary legislation is in draft. There are no building societies.

There are no barracks, compounds or tenement houses, and there is no apparent need for additional dwellings; although some are in very poor condition. A small grant will be asked for under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act for the construction of experimental working-class cottages. The object is to produce model cottages which are inexpensive, hurricane-resistant and in line with modern requirements.

SOCIAL WELFARE

There has so far been little social welfare activity due to the smallness of the population of these Islands, the poverty of the settlements and the depressed economic conditions which prevailed for a number of years. Lack of employment and the complete absence of any of the amenities of civilised life such as sport, cinemas, dances and the like is causing many of the young people to leave the Islands in search of work in the United States. An improvement in the economic life of the Islands is the only real solution. The rehabilitation of the Islands must be based on

and revival of several minor industries is being actively pursued, but these are long-term projects. It is proposed to utilise the village schools in the outlying settlements as simple community centres. As a start six sub-libraries have been set up affiliated to the Victoria Library at Grand Turk. As soon as funds permit it is hoped to have selected persons trained in social welfare work.

There is no Government insurance against old age, unemployment or sickness, but relief is granted in necessitous cases and cost about £1,000 in 1947. £422 was spent in 1947 on relief works to alleviate unemployment. There are seven Friendly Societies (including Freemasons, Odd-fellows, Good Templars, Good Samaritans and Shepherds) which do much good work in giving assistance and relief to their members in cases of distress, sickness and death.

The after-care of prisoners has so far been left to private charity and little has been done to combat juvenile delinquency. The recommendations of the Prison Board and of the ministers of the three principal religious denominations have been considered and some improvement will be effected in 1948.

Chapter 8 : Legislation

Eighteen Ordinances were passed by the Legislative Board during the year. These were :

- No. 1 of 1947. The Tonnage Tax (Continuance) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 2 of 1947. The Hurricane Relief (Amendment) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 3 of 1947. The Library (Amendment) Ordinance, 1947.
- No. 4 of 1947. The Salt Industry Control (Validation of Payments) Ordinance, 1947.

No. 5 of 1947. The Supplementary Appropriation (1944-45) Ordinance, 1947.

No. 6 of 1947. The Probate and Administration Ordinance, 1947.

No. 7 of 1947. The Supplementary Appropriation (1943-44) Ordinance, 1947.

No. 8 of 1947. The Tax Collection Ordinance, 1947.

Not yet assented to :

~~The Magistrates' Code of Procedure (Amendment) Ordinance, 1947.~~

~~The Sentence of Death (Expectant Mothers) Ordinance, 1947.~~

~~Ordinance, 1947.~~

~~Ordinance, 1947.~~

~~(Amendment) Ordinance, 1947.~~

~~Ordinance, 1947.~~

~~, 1947.~~

~~, 1947.~~

~~Finance, 1947.~~

~~or compensation for~~

~~old age. During~~

~~Government's~~

~~body in force.~~

Chapter 9: Justice, Police and Prisons

The law in force in the Dependency consists of the Common Law of England as it existed at the time of the settlement, certain applied Acts of the Imperial Parliament and of the Bahamas Legislature, and the Ordinances passed by the local Legislature. By the Order in Council of 1873 the Legislature of Jamaica is empowered to extend to the Dependency legislation passed by it.

The Supreme Court is presided over by a Judge. The Supreme Court of Judicature of Jamaica has jurisdiction in matrimonial and divorce causes, and is constituted a Court of Appeal from the Supreme Court of the Dependency. By virtue of the Turks and Caicos Islands Divorce Law 1943, jurisdiction in matrimonial and divorce causes has also been conferred on the Supreme Court.

There are three Magistrates' Courts, namely, Grand Turk, Salt Cay and Cockburn Harbour.

The Police Force consists of three non-commissioned officers and three police constables, all but one of whom are seconded from the Jamaica Constabulary Force. In addition, a number of special constables are continuously employed at Grand Turk, Salt Cay and Cockburn Harbour. In the Caicos Islands there is a district constable at each of the eight principal settlements. The training of locally recruited constables in Jamaica has been restarted and it is proposed to replace most of the seconded Jamaican police during 1948.

There is a central prison at Grand Turk, into which prisoners sentenced to terms of less than 12 months' imprisonment are received. Prisoners sentenced to terms of imprisonment of 12 months and more are sent to the General Penitentiary, Jamaica. There is a lock-up at Cockburn Harbour, where prisoners from the Caicos Islands may be imprisoned for a term not exceeding 14 days.

Juvenile delinquents are also received at the central prison, but occupy a separate building from that of adult prisoners. Most of the time of the juvenile delinquents is spent outside the prison in the pursuit of education, recreation and the learning of trades. They are under the supervision of the Prison Board.

The central prison is a large, well-constructed stone building with ample accommodation and is kept in good order and sanitary condition. There is complete separation between male and female inmates. There are 10 cells for males and 4 for females, and no associated wards. Each prisoner has 70 square feet of area and over 1,000 cubic feet of space during hours of sleep. There is no penal labour in force. The male prisoners are employed in the breaking of stones and work of a general nature on Government property. The prisoners are well fed and are allowed 11 hours for sleep and every care is taken of their health. The Medical Officer visits the prison regularly, and generally the prisoners enjoy very good health. The ministers of the various religious bodies hold divine services at the prison regularly.

The Magistrate at Grand Turk acts as inspector of the prison. There is a gaoler, three warders, a matron and a cook. The matron supervises

the female prisoners and the juvenile delinquents. There is a Prison Board which meets once a month to inspect and supervise the prison.

The crime statistics for 1947 were:

Number of crimes reported or known to Police	.	.	.	414
Number of crimes brought before Magistrate	.	.	.	286
Number of cases dropped	.	.	.	128
Number of persons proceeded against (male)	.	.	.	229
(female)	.	.	.	57
Number of persons apprehended	.	.	.	120
Number of persons summoned	.	.	.	166
Number discharged	.	.	.	37
Number summarily convicted	.	.	.	249
Number imprisoned	.	.	.	27
Number whipped	.	.	.	1
Number fined	.	.	.	189
Number bound over	.	.	.	32

The convictions were classified as follows:

Offences against the person	62
Praedial larcency	3
Malicious injury to property	0
Other offences against property	29
Miscellaneous minor offences	136
Other crime	10
Offences against revenue, etc.	9

Chapter 10: Public Utilities

There are no public utilities in the normally accepted sense. Owing to the nature of the Islands, almost all water used for drinking and washing is rainwater stored in private and public tanks. There are 12 public tanks with a total capacity of 507,000 gallons situated as follows:

	<i>No. of Tanks</i>	<i>Gallons</i>
Grand Turk	5	355,000
Salt Cay	3	36,000
South Caicos (Cockburn Harbour)	2	72,000
Kew	1	40,000
Blue Hills	1	4,000
TOTAL		507,000

Drinking water is sold at 1d. for 4 gallons and frequently has to be rationed during dry periods. There are also a number of Government wells. A programme of extending and repairing catchment areas and of increasing water storage is being pursued as fast as funds permit.

Chapter 11 : Communications

Before the war there was a regular steamship service between Grand Turk and the United States of America operated by the Royal Netherlands Steamship Company. Elders & Fyffes steamers also called occasionally to disembark passengers and mails from the United Kingdom and to embark passengers and mails for Jamaica. During the war direct services ceased and the only regular service for several years has been by the M.V. *Kirksons*. This vessel sails at approximately monthly intervals between Grand Turk and Jamaica and carries general cargo, mails and passengers. There is also a fortnightly despatch of airmail *via* Haiti.

There is constant communication between the Dependency, the Dominican Republic, Haiti and the Bahama Islands, by small sailing vessels engaged in trade.

Internal mails are carried between the several islands by small sailing-craft engaged in local trade.

An air service between the Dependency and Jamaica was attempted in 1947 but was unsuccessful.

Mails to and from Europe are despatched and received *via* Jamaica. The Post Office dealt with about 147,500 postal articles during the year.

Grand Turk is an important cable junction, there being cables to Jamaica, Barbados and Bermuda. The Cable Company supplies a news bulletin daily, for which the Government pays a subsidy.

The Government radio-telephone system provides, in co-operation with Cable & Wireless Ltd., service between Grand Turk, Cockburn and Salt Cay.

Before the hurricane of 1945 there was a small Government-operated telephone service at Grand Turk ; there were 12 connections to Government quarters, offices, hospital, etc., and 16 private connections. The telephone system was destroyed in the hurricane and is now under reconstruction and extension. There was also a public telephone system at Grand Turk with provision for 60 lines, but it, too, was destroyed in 1945 and is now being reconstructed.

There are no overland telegraphs.

The streets and roads in the principal settlements were kept in good condition. A few motor cars and motor trucks are in use. The so-called roads in the Caicos Islands are only bush paths.

There are no railways, tramways or omnibuses.

There are three ports of entry, namely, Grand Turk, Cockburn Harbour and Salt Cay. Each port has an open roadstead and ships anchor at a short distance from the shore.

At the end of the year there were 111 registered vessels owned in the Dependency, totalling 1,445 tons. The number of vessels that entered the several ports during the year was as follows :

	Number	Net Tonnage
Total shipping entered	315	60,893

PART III

Chapter 1 : Geography and Climate

THE Turks and Caicos Islands lie between 21° and 22° north latitude and 71° and $72^{\circ} 50'$ west longitude, at the south-east end of the Bahama Islands. They lie about 90 miles to the north of the Dominican Republic, about 720 miles to the south-west of Bermuda, and about 450 miles to the north-east of Jamaica.

They consist of two groups of islands, separated by a deep-water channel about 22 miles wide, known as the Turks Islands passage. The Turks Islands lie to the east of the passage and the Caicos Islands to the west. The area of these islands is estimated to be about 166 square miles, but no thorough survey of the group has ever been made.

The Turks Islands consist of two inhabited islands, Grand Turk and Salt Cay, four uninhabited islands, and a large number of rocks. A three-pointed bank of reef surrounds the group.

The Caicos Islands, which lie to the west of the channel, surround the Caicos Bank, a triangular shoal 58 miles long on its northern side and 56 miles long on its eastern and western sides, respectively.

In his Survey of Sponge Grounds (1938), Dr. H. H. Brown describes the geological structure of the Caicos Bank as precisely similar to that of the Bahamas. "A flat-topped rock rises steeply from the ocean bed consisting entirely of aeolian limestone of tertiary origin; this rock mass comprises the whole Caicos Banks and Cays and is similar to other rock masses of the Bahama group."

The northern and eastern sides of the Bank are bounded by a chain of islands separated from each other by narrow passages. The principal islands of the Caicos group are South Caicos, East Caicos, Middle Caicos, North Caicos, Providenciales Island, and West Caicos.

At a varying distance from the ocean coast line of these islands there is an almost continuous barrier reef. Dr. Brown writes: "This reef of living coral is superimposed on the edge of the limestone land mass. Within the reef the boat channel is full of sunken coral heads and boilers on which the seas break heavily. It is therefore very dangerous to navigate." On the islands "the limestone is weathered into the familiar Bahamian honeycomb rock in the interstices of which there are little pockets of soil which support a vigorous growth of bush." On the bank coast of these islands there is found "a mangrove and seawater swamp which is intersected by a series of shallow creeks. The basis of the swamp consists of a covering of white marl over the underlying limestone. This marl is

composed of almost pure calcium carbonate and had resulted from the breaking down of the limestone rock." Dr. Brown divides the bed of the bank into four areas lying roughly from east to west. The first beginning from the north consists of white mud or marl under some three or four feet of water. The second, a zone of sandy mud in water up to a fathom in depth. The third, a zone of shell gravel and scattered bars known locally as "Bank." "The ground had enough sand and mud to bind with the abundant shells into a stable surface, which is not shifted or stirred up by currents and high winds; it can therefore support a rich flora and fauna, patches of eel grass and burrowing animals (*Annelida Mollusca* and *Crustacea*). Shells of mollusca are abundant in the surface."

The last zone under shallow water consists of clean shifting biologically barren sand, which in places is dry at low tide.

At the southern and south-western edge of the bank is found "the barrier reef from the edge of which soundings drop down with spectacular suddenness."

The entire group known as the Turks and Caicos Islands extends for a distance of 75 miles from east to west and 50 miles from north to south.

The climate may be classed as good. The temperature ranges throughout the year from 60° minimum to 90° maximum. Although the period from April to November is generally hot, the heat is somewhat tempered by the prevailing trade winds. The weather from December is generally pleasant. At Grand Turk the average rainfall for the last five years has been 31.7 inches. The rainfall during 1947 was 19.73 inches and the maximum and minimum temperature was 93° and 64° with a mean maximum and minimum of 88° and 70.7°.

These Islands have suffered periodically from the effects of terrible hurricanes. The hurricane of 1945 caused great destruction owing to the velocity of the wind which exceeded 150 miles an hour, but as the wind came from the east there was no damage due to heavy seas.

Chapter 2 : History

It is said that the Turks Islands derived their name from a species of cactus found there by the first settlers, the scarlet head of which resembles a Turkish fez. These islands were discovered in 1512 by Juan Ponce de Leon while on a voyage from Puerto Rico. They remained uninhabited until the year 1678, when a party of Bermudians arrived and established the salt-raking industry. From that date onwards parties of Bermudians used to resort annually to the Turks Islands to rake salt, arriving about the month of March and returning to Bermuda about November, when the salt-raking season was over. The Bermudians were expelled by the Spaniards in 1710, but soon returned and continued the salt industry, with occasional interruption by Spanish attacks. Several attempts to obtain possession of the islands were also made by the French. Then in the year 1766 an agent, Mr. Andrew Symmer, was appointed "to reside there, and, by his residence on the spot, to insure the right of the Islands to His Majesty." By an Order in Council of 1781 regulations were

approved for the management of the salinas (salt ponds) and for the preservation of order amongst the inhabitants. In 1799 the Turks and Caicos Islands were placed under the Bahamas Government, and so they remained until 1848, when, in answer to a petition from the inhabitants, a separate charter was granted. Under this charter the islands had an elective Legislative Council and a President administering the Government. This system was found to be too expensive, and in 1873 the inhabitants forwarded a petition praying for the abrogation of the charter. The islands were then annexed to Jamaica, and still remain one of its dependencies. The Dependency is now administered by a Commissioner assisted by a Legislative Board.

The Turks and Caicos Islands are subject to hurricanes. Severe hurricanes occurred in 1837, 1866, 1888, 1908, 1926, 1928 and 1945, the most severe being those of 1866 and 1945. Over £40,000 was spent in repairing damage done by the hurricane of 1945 and even this sum was inadequate to deal with more than part of the damage. Generous help was received from the British and Jamaican Governments, and from subscribers in Jamaica, Bermuda and Nassau.

A number of endeavours have been made by means of subsidies to secure a regular steamer service with Jamaica but they have been short-lived, the first contract being with the Atlas Company in 1873. Since 1940 it has proved impossible to maintain any regular steamer service.

The first cable was landed at Grand Turk in 1898 by the Halifax and Bermuda Cable Company which later became known as the Direct West India Cable Company Ltd. In 1923 an inter-island radio service was inaugurated and was operated until 1941 when the Grand Turk station was taken over by Cable & Wireless Ltd., who also took over the Direct West India Cable Company's cables. The Salt Cay and Cockburn Harbour stations, which work in conjunction with Cable & Wireless Ltd., are still operated by Government. It is believed that this was the first radio-telephone service to be operated by a British Dependency. Cable & Wireless Ltd. also established wireless connection with the Dominican Republic in 1941. A direct radio-telephone service between Grand Turk and Jamaica was opened by Cable & Wireless Ltd. on 1st December, 1947.

During the second world war an anti-aircraft battery was stationed at Grand Turk. The last garrison had been withdrawn over 80 years before when a detachment of the 1st West India Regiment under the command of Ensign Nolan was withdrawn to Nassau. A temporary air base was established by the United States Army Air Force on South Caicos Island in 1944 and an airstrip constructed. The base and strip were handed over to the Government of the Turks and Caicos Islands in 1947.

On 31st August, 1947, the Right Honourable Arthur Creech Jones, M.P., His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, and Mrs. Creech Jones paid a brief visit to Grand Turk. This was the first visit ever made to this Dependency by one of His Majesty's Ministers, though the island had been previously honoured by a visit by a member of the Royal Family. His Royal Highness Prince George (later the Duke of Kent) visited Grand Turk in 1928 in H.M.S. *Durban* in which he served as Lieutenant.

Chapter 3 : Administration

The Government of this Dependency is administered by a Commissioner who is President of the Legislative Board. He is selected by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and appointed by the Governor of Jamaica. Mr. C. E. Wool-Lewis assumed the duties of Commissioner in October 1940.

There is a Legislative Board comprising the Commissioner and two official and three unofficial members appointed by the Governor of Jamaica.

There are a number of Government Boards, appointed by the Commissioner, which deal with various local matters. There is also a Salt Industry Board appointed by the Governor of Jamaica.

There is no political franchise.

The Government of these islands is under the supervision of the Governor of Jamaica, whose assent to the ordinances of the Legislative Board is required.

Certain laws of Jamaica are in express terms made applicable to the Turks and Caicos Islands.

The seat of Government is at Grand Turk where the Commissioner resides.

Other settlements are Cockburn Harbour in South Caicos where there is a District Commissioner and Salt Cay in the island of that name, where there is a Government Officer. There are no settlements in the Caicos Islands all of which are inhabited solely by people of African origin, and at each of which there is a District Constable.

During the year the Commissioner visited Cockburn Harbour and Salt Cay on a number of occasions and also flew over the Caicos Islands landing at New. The difficulties of administering the scattered settlements of the Dependency have been lessened by the purchase of a motor-launcher for which a grant was provided under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. During 1947 the launch was out of commission awaiting repair.

District Boards have been established in four of the larger Caicos settlements to advise on public health, water supplies, communications and other matters of local interest. These Boards have already shown themselves to be of value and to provide a useful link between the people in remote parts of the Dependency and Government.

The Commissioner visited Turfand three times during the year in connection with plans of development and welfare, the reorganisation of the salt industry, and general administrative matters.

Chapter 4 : Weights and Measures

Imperial weights and measures are in use.

Chapter 5 : Newspapers and Periodicals

No newspapers or periodicals are now published in the Dependency.

Chapter 6 : Bibliography

Handbook of the Turks and Caicos Islands. By Rev. J. H. Pusey. Kingston, Colonial Publishers Co. Ltd. (out of print).

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Caicos Islands and Sisal Industry. By F. H. Watkins. Cd. 3766, 1908.

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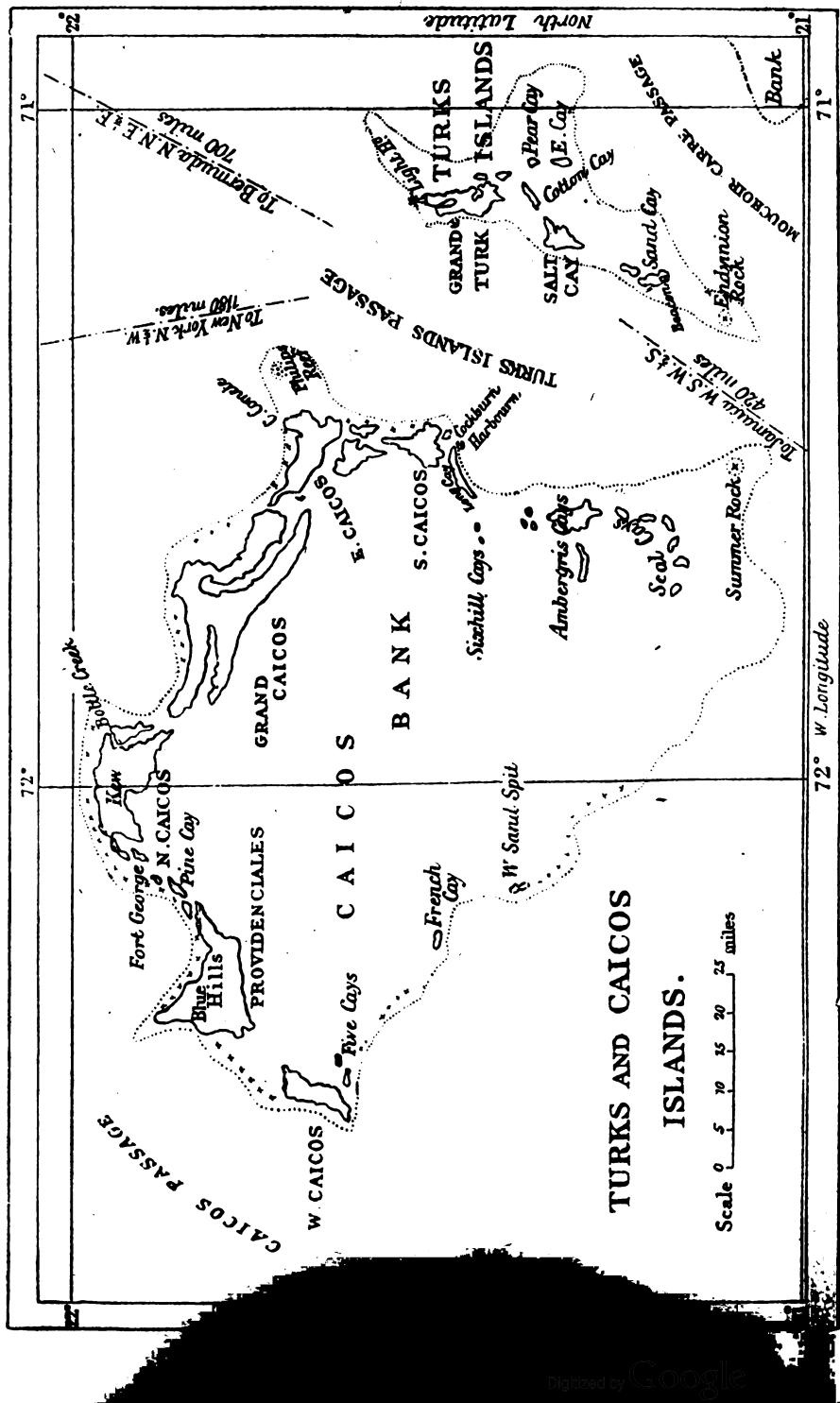
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